

List of English words of French origin

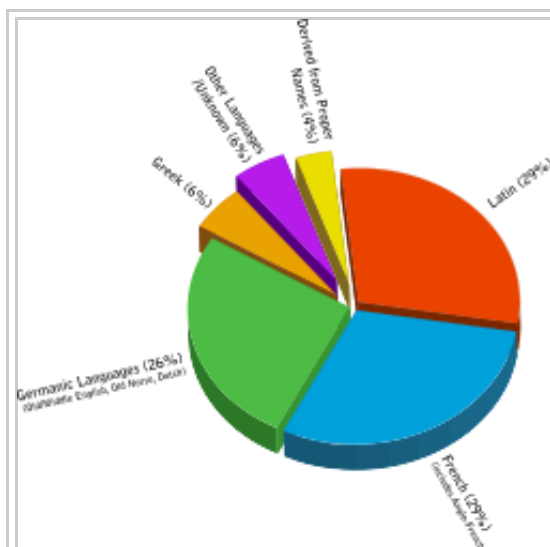
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A great number of **words of French origin** have entered the English language to the extent that many Latin words have come to the English language. According to different sources, 45% of all English words have a French origin.^[1] This fact suggests that 80,000 words should appear in this list; this list, however, only includes words imported directly from French, such as both joy and joyous, and does not include derivatives formed in English of words borrowed from French, including joyful, joyfulness, partisanship, and parenthood. It also excludes both combinations of words of French origin with words whose origin is a language other than French — e. g.: ice cream, sunray, jellyfish, killjoy, lifeguard, and passageway — and English-made combinations of words of French origin — i. e.: grapefruit (grape + fruit,) layperson (lay + person,) mailorder, magpie, marketplace, surrender, petticoat, and straitjacket. This list also excludes words that come from French but were introduced into the English language via a language other than French, which include commodore, domineer, ketone, loggia, lotto, mariachi, monsignor, oboe, paella, panzer, picayune, ranch, vendue, and veneer.

Although French is mainly from Latin (which accounts for about 60% of English vocabulary either directly or via a Romance language), it also includes words from Gaulish and Germanic languages (especially Old Frankish). Since English is of Germanic origin, words that have entered English from the Germanic elements in French might not strike the eye as distinctively from French. Conversely, as Latin gave many derivatives to both the English and the French languages, ascertaining that a given Latinate derivative did not come to the English language via French can be difficult in a few cases.

Most of the French vocabulary now appearing in English was imported over the centuries following the Norman Conquest of 1066, when England came under the administration of Norman-speaking peoples. The majority of the population of England continued to use their Anglo-Saxon language, but it was influenced by the language of the ruling elite, resulting in doublets. Consider for example the words for the meats eaten by the Anglo-Norman nobility and the corresponding animals grown by the Anglo-Saxon peasants: beef / ox, mutton / sheep, veal / calf, pork / pig, or pairs of words pertaining to different registers of language: commence / start, continue / go on, disengage / withdraw, encounter / meet, vend / sell, purchase / buy. Words of French origin often refer to more abstract or elaborate notions than their Anglo-Saxon equivalents (e.g. liberty / freedom, justice / fairness), and are therefore of less frequent use in everyday language. This may not, however, be the case for all English words of French origin. Consider, for example: able, car, chair, city, country, fine, fruit, journey, juice, just, part, people, real, stay, table, travel, use, very, and wait.

After the rise of Henry Plantagenet to the throne of England, other forms of dialectal French may have gained in influence to the detriment of Norman French (notably the variants of Anjou where the House of Plantagenet came from, and possibly Poitevin, the tongue of Eleanor of Aquitaine). With the English claim to the throne of France, the influence of the language in use at the royal court of France in Paris



The percentage of modern English words derived from each language group are as follows:

French: ~29%

Latin (including words used only in scientific / medical / legal contexts): ~29%

Germanic: ~26%

Others: ~17%

increased. The cultural influence of France remained strong in the following centuries and from the Renaissance onward borrowings were mainly made from Parisian French, which became the *de facto* standard language of France.

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Notable fields of French influence

Norman rule of England had a lasting impact on British society. Words from Anglo-Norman or Old French include terms related to;

Daily use

*The English names for some of the following concepts and objects may at first sight not appear to be of French origin, though they all are. In Germanic languages other than English (e.g., Dutch, German, etc.) most of these concepts and objects **do not** have names with French (or in general, Latin) origins.*

Money (from the French 'monnaie'), **bottle** (from the French 'bouteille'), **chair** (from the French 'chaise'), **table** (from the French 'table'), **chamber** (from the French 'chambre'), **air** (from the French 'air'), **flower** (from the French 'fleur'), **fork** (from the French 'fourchette'), **garden** (from the French 'jardin'), **lamp** (from the French 'lampe'), **farm** (from the French 'ferme'), **forest** (from the French 'forêt'), **hotel** (from the French 'hôtel'), **brick** (from the French 'brique'), **image** (from the French 'image'), **plate** (from the French 'plateau'), **story** (from the French 'histoire'), **odour** or **odor** (from the French 'odeur'), **stranger** (from the French 'étranger'), **beef** (from the French 'boeuf'), **vinegar** (from the French 'vinaigre'), **parent** (from the French 'parent'), **herbs** (from the French 'herbes'), **arm** (from the French 'arme'), **army** (From the French 'armée'), **source** (from the French 'source'), **grand** (from the French 'grand'), **joy** (from the French 'joie'), **fluid** (from the French 'fluide'), **ray** (from the French 'rayon'), **bicycle** (from the French 'bicyclette'), **tube** (from the French 'tube'), **car** (from the French 'char'), **eagle** (from the French 'aigle'), **lake** (from the French 'lac'), **mountain** (from the French 'montagne'), **lion** (from the French 'lion'), **voyage** (from the French 'voyage'), **lizard** (from the French 'lézard'), **bullet** (from the French 'balle'), **hero** (from the French 'héro'), **hazard** (from the French 'hasard'), **cave** (from the French 'cave'), **current** (from the French 'courant'), **carbon** (from the French 'charbon'), **autumn** (from the French 'automne'), **case** (from the French 'cas'), **pedestal** (from the French 'piédestal'), **parachute** (from the French 'para-chute'), **habit** (from the French 'habitude'), **altitude** (from the French 'altitude'), **attitude** (from the French 'attitude'), **final** (from the French 'finale'), **revenge** (from the French 'revanche'), **itinerary** (from the French 'itinéraire'), **orange**(fruit) (from the French 'orange'), **ticket** (from the French 'étiquette'), **barrel** (from the French 'baril'), **retard** (from the French 'retarder'), **appeasement** (from the French 'apaisement'), **aviation** (from the French 'avion'), **miracle** (from the French 'miracle'), **tablet** (from the French 'tablette'), **pincer** (from the French 'pincer'), **tennis** (from the French 'tenir'), **exercise** (from the French 'exercice'), **repetition** (from the French 'répétition')), **proposition** (from the French 'proposition'), **police** (from the French 'police'), **apartment** (from the French 'appartement'), **atrocitiy** (from the French 'atrocité'), **ignorant** (from the French 'ignorant'), **arrogant** (from the French 'arrogant'), **large** (from the French 'large'), **brave** (from the French 'brave'), **stupid** (from the French 'stupide'), **luminous** (from the French 'lumineux'), **to push** (from the French 'pousser'), **to touch** (from the French 'toucher'), **to cry** (from the French 'crier'), **to gain** (from the French 'gagner'), **to join** (from the French 'joindre'), **to pray** (from the French 'prier'), **to marry** (from the French 'se marier'), **to divorce** (from the French 'se divorcer'), **to return** (from the French 'retourner'), **to sign** (from the French 'signer'), **to mention** (from the French 'mentionner'), **to paint** (from the French 'peindre'), **to pave** (from the French 'paver'), **to launch** (from the French 'lancer'), **to visit** (from the French 'visiter'), **to reduce** (from the French 'réduire'), **to obtain** (from the French 'obtenir'), **to promise** (from the French 'promettre'), **to admit** (from the French 'admettre'), **to appear** (from the French 'apparaître'), **to disappear** (from the French 'disparaître'), **to vomit** (from the French 'vomir'), **to train** (from the French 's'entraîner'), **to refuse** (from the French 'refuser'), **to invent** (from the French 'inventer'), **to mock** (from the French 'se moquer de'), **to emerge** (from the French 'émerger'), **to install** (from the French 'installer'), **to reject** (from the French 'rejeter'), **to guard** (from the French 'garder'), **to treat** (from the French 'traiter'), **to secure** (from the French 'securiser'), **to attack** (from the French 'attaquer'), **to complete** (from the French 'compléter'), **to consider** (from the French 'considérer'), **to advance** (from the French 'avancer'), **to arrest** (from the French 'arrêter'), **to distract** (from the French 'distraindre'), **to partake** (from the French 'partager'), **to forfeit** (from the French 'forfait'), **to reflect** (from the French 'réfléter'), **to render** (from the French 'rendre'), **to adore** (from the French 'adorer'), **to engage** (from the French 'engager'), **to navigate** (from the French 'naviguer'), **to evoke** (from the French 'évoquer'), **to compromise** (from the French 'compromettre'), **to reinforce** (from the French 'renforcer'), **to negotiate** (from the French 'négocier'), **to cascade** (from the French 'cascader'), **to appreciate** (from the French 'apprécier'), **to pulverise** or **to pulverize** (from the French 'pulvériser'), **to clarify** (from the French 'clarifier'), **to restore** (from the French 'restaurer'), **to refine** (from the French 'raffiner'), **to pardon** (from the French 'pardonner'), **to excuse** (from the French 'excuser'), **to adjust** (from the French

'ajuster'), **to glorify** (from the French 'glorifier'), **to (e)rase** (from the French 'raser'), **to enrich** (from the French 's'enrichir'), **to depart** (from the French 'départ'), **to contain** (from the French 'contenir'), **to maintain** (from the French 'maintenir'), **to envelop** (from the French 'envelopper')

Feudalism

Chivalry (homage, liege, peasant, government, seigniorage, suzerain, vassal, villain) and other institutions (bailiff, chancellor, council, government, mayor, minister, parliament), the organisation of religion (abbey, clergy, cloister, diocese, friar, mass, parish, prayer, preach, priest), the nobility (baron, count, dame, duke, marquis, prince, sir), and the art of war (armour, baldric, dungeon, hauberk, mail, portcullis, surcoat). Many of these words related to the feudal system or medieval warfare have a Germanic origin (mainly through Old Frankish) (see also *French words of Germanic origin*).

The Norman origin of the British monarchy is still visible in expressions like Prince Regent, heir apparent, Princess Royal where the adjective is placed after the noun, like in French.

Heraldry

The vocabulary of heraldry has been heavily influenced by French (blazon, or, argent, sable, gules, passant), for more details see tinctures, attitudes, and charges of heraldry.

Sometimes used in heraldry, some mythological beasts (cockatrice, dragon, griffin, hippogriff, phoenix) or exotic animals (lion, leopard, antelope, gazelle, giraffe, camel, zebu, elephant, baboon, dolphin, ocelot, ostrich, chameleon) draw their name from French. It is also the case of some animals native of Europe (via Anglo-Norman: eagle, buzzard, falcon, squirrel, coney, rabbit, leveret, marten, ferret, salmon).

Military

The vocabulary of warfare and the military include many words of French origin (battalion, dragoon, infantry, cavalry, army, artillery, corvette, musketeer, carabineer, pistol, fusilier, squad, squadron, platoon, brigade, corps, sortie, reconnaissance/reconnoitre, surveillance, rendezvous, espionage, volley, siege, terrain, troop, camouflage, logistics, accoutrements, bivouac, aide-de-camp, legionnaire, morale, esprit de corps. See also military ranks: sergeant, lieutenant, captain, colonel, general, admiral). Many fencing terms are also from French.

Politics and Economics

The political/economic lexicon include many words of French origin like money (from the French 'monnaie'), liberalism, capitalism, materialism, nationalism, plebiscite, coup d'état, regime, sovereignty.

Law

The judicial lexicon has also been heavily influenced by French (justice, judge, jury, attorney, court, case). (*See also Law French*).

Diplomacy

attaché, chargé d'affaires, envoy, embassy, chancery, diplomacy, démarche, communiqué, aide-mémoire, détente, entente, rapprochement, accord, treaty, alliance, passport, protocol.

Arts

surrealism, impressionism, fauvism, cubism, symbolism, art nouveau, gouache, aquarelle, collage, grisaille ...;

Architecture

aisle, arcade, arch, vault, belfry, arc-boutant, buttress, bay, estrade, facade, balustrade, terrace, lunette, niche, pavilion, pilaster, porte cochère ;

Cuisine

Veal, beef, pork, mutton, petit four, soufflé, mille-feuille, croissant, pastry, gateau, baba au rhum, cream, caramel, custard, marmalade, meringue, clafoutis, flognarde, beef bourguignon, cassoulet, casserole, confit, gratin, mustard, mayonnaise, sauce, pâté, foie gras, terrine, navarin ...

Colours

Other influences include colour names (ecru, mauve, beige, carmine, maroon, blue, orange, violet, vermilion, turquoise, lilac, perse, scarlet, cerise) ; vegetables or fruits (courgette, aubergine, cabbage, carrot, cherry, chestnut, nutmeg, quince, lemon, orange, apricot); months of the year (January, March, May, July, November, December).

Science and Technology

Some of the French words that made their way into the English language were coined by French inventors, discoverers or pioneers, or scientists: cinema, television, helicopter, bathyscaphe, lactose, bacteriophage, chlorophyll, mastodon, oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, photography, stethoscope, thermometer, troposphere.

Named after French people

Some French words were named after French people (from their family name), especially in the fields of science (ampere, baud, becquerel, coulomb, curie, daguerreotype, pascal, pasteurise, vernier), botany and mineralogy (begonia, bougainvillea, clementine, magnolia, dolomite, nicotine), fashion and style or any other cultural aspect (leotard, recamier, mansard, chauvinism, kir, praline, saxophone, silhouette).

Geography

The names of certain cities in non-francophone regions/countries entered English with French spelling (Ypres, Bruges, Turin, Milan, Venice, Plaisance, Florence, Rome, Naples, Syracuse, Vienna, Prague, Munich, Cologne, Aix-la-Chapelle, Seville, Constantinople, The Hague).

Indirect Influences

Some words from Old French have been imported again from Middle French or Modern French, but have generally taken a more restrictive or specialised meaning the second time. Consider for instance : luminary / luminaire, liquor / liqueur, castle / château, hostel / hotel, mask / masque, necessary / nécessaire, petty / petit, ticket / etiquette, troop / troupe, vanguard / avant-garde. Note that the word in

French has kept the general meaning: e.g. *château* in French means *castle*. Even when not imported several times in different forms, loanwords from French generally have a more restrictive or specialised meaning than in French: e.g. *legume* (in Fr. *légume* means *vegetable*), *gâteau* (in Fr. *gâteau* means *cake*).

In some cases, the English language has been more conservative than the French one with Old French words, at least in spelling if not in pronunciation: e.g. *apostle* (O.Fr. *apostle* / M.Fr. *apôtre*), *castle* (O.Fr. *castel* or *chastel* / M.Fr. *château*), *forest* (O.Fr. *forest* / M.Fr. *forêt*), *vessel* (O.Fr. *vaissel* / M.Fr. *vaisseau*). Other Old French words have even disappeared from Modern French: *dandelion*.

On the other hand, a move to restore the classical roots (Latin or Ancient Greek) occurred in the 16th and 17th centuries. Thus words from Old French saw their spelling re-Latinized. Although in most cases this did not affect their pronunciation (e.g. *debt*, *doubt*, *indict*, *mayor*), in some cases it did (e.g. *abnormal*, *adventure*, *benefit*). The *ph* transcription of words of Greek etymology was restored instead of the *f*. Thus *fantosme* became *phantom*, *fesan* became *pheasant*. This move occurred also in French, although less systematically (Old French *farmacie* became *pharmacie* ("pharmacy"), *fenix* became *phénix* ("phoenix"), but *fantosme* became *fantôme* ("phantom, ghost") and *fesan* became *faisan* ("pheasant").

Beside re-Latinization that blurred the French origin of some words (e.g. *peradventure*), other modifications in spelling have included folk etymology alterations (see *belfry*, *crayfish*, *gillyflower*, *gingerbread*, *penthouse*, *pickaxe*).

Furthermore, the spelling of some words was changed to keep the pronunciation as close to the original as possible (e.g. *leaven*), whereas in other cases the French spelling was kept and resulted in totally different pronunciation than French (e.g. *leopard*, *levee*). Terms that most recently entered the English language have kept French pronunciation and spelling (*aplomb*, *barrage*, *brochure*, *bureau*, *dossier*, *garage*, *machine*, *mirage*, *panache*, *café*, *décor*, *bourgeoisie*, *ennui*, *espionage*, *élite*, *expertise*, *intrigue*, *liaison*, *lingerie*, *armoire*, *critique*, *genre*, *ambiance*, *collage*, *montage*, *plaque*, *penchant*, *repertoire*, *entourage*, *terrain*, *glacier*, *debris*, *tranche*, *entrepreneur*, *financier*, *arbitrage*), though this may change with time (e.g. the initial *h* in *hotel* is not silent anymore, consider also the evolving pronunciation of *herb*, or *garage*). Expressions like *femme fatale*, *bête noire*, *enfant terrible* are still recognisably French.

Borrowings are not a one-way process (*See Reborrowing*), some words of French origin ultimately come from Old English (Anglo-Saxon words) : e.g. : *bateau*, *chiffon*, *gourmet*. While conversely English words of French origin made their way "back" into Modern French : *budget*, *challenge*, *fuel*, *gay*, *gin*, *humour*, *interview*, *jury*, *management*, *mess*, *pedigree*, *record*, *sport*, *squat*, *standard*, *suspense*, *tennis*, *ticket*, *toast*, *toboggan*, *tunnel*, *vintage*.

0-9 & A-C

D-I

J-R

S-Z

See also

- French phrases used by English speakers

For a list of words relating

- Law French
- Glossary of fencing, (predominantly from French).
- Glossary of ballet (predominantly from French)
- Lists of English loanwords by country or language of origin
- List of English words of Gaulish origin
- List of English words of Latin origin
- List of English Latinates of Germanic origin
- List of English words of Frankish origin
- Latin influence in English
- List of French words of Germanic origin
- List of French words of Gaulish origin
- List of French words of Arabic origin

References

1. ^ "Why Study French" (http://fren.athabasca.ca/why_study.php). Athabasca University.

External links

- More than 5,000 French Words with Pronunciation (<http://french101.me/learn-french/>)
- One French Word a Day (<http://facebook.french101.me/dfp/listen.php>)
- Oxford English Dictionary (<http://www.oed.com/>)
- Dictionary.com (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/>)
- Online Etymology Dictionary (<http://www.etymonline.com/>)
- List of English words of French origin (<http://www.ezglot.com/etymologies.php?l=eng&l2=fra&submit=Compare>)
- Centre National de Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales (<http://www.cnrtl.fr/etymologie/>) (**French**)

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to with French language origins, see the ***English terms derived from French*** category of words in Wiktionary, the free dictionary.



For a list of words relating to with Middle French origins, see the ***English terms derived from Middle French*** category of words in Wiktionary, the free dictionary.



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For a list of words relating to with Louisiana French origins, see the ***English terms derived from Cajun French*** category of words in Wiktionary, the free dictionary.



For a list of words relating to with Louisiana French origins, see the ***English terms derived from Louisiana Creole French*** category of words in Wiktionary, the free dictionary.

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